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SINGHA DURBAR

A television and radio drama and outreach initiative to

Create possibilities for collaborative political culture in the public imagination

Award #: AID-367-A-14-00001

ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2014

Revision submitted on 14 March 2014.

This publication was prepared by Search for Common Ground Nepal, for review by USAID.



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I. INTRODUCTION

Search for Common Ground (SFCG), with funding from USAID, is implementing a multi-media, dialogue and policy project aimed at transforming the political culture in Nepal. The initiative centers on a 13-episode political television drama, *Singha Durbar* (Parliament House) and a 52-episode radio drama, *Sthaniya Sarkar* (Local Government). The project uses these two media products to catalyze dialogue among key stakeholders about policy issues, good governance, and collaborative leadership.

The project runs through the period of January 3 2014 to January 2, 2016.

As mentioned in the Cooperative Agreement, this Annual Work plan 2014 for the project Singha Durbar (SD) outlines the following:

- a) Anticipated staffing of key positions;
- b) Activities and events schedule, including performance milestones;
- c) Quarterly Activity Details
- d) Travel plans;
- e) Expenses (annual budget);
- f) Purchases including those subject to approval; and
- g) Event calendar of the radio and TV episodes to be broadcast.

In addition, it also includes a section on:

- h) Anticipated sub-awardees; and
- i) Request for Presumptive Exemption.

The work plan also outlines the request for modification of the Cooperative Agreement, in particular:

- Changes in the Key Personnel;
 - Change in the payment system based on SFCG's provision of LOC;
 - Addition of the provision for anticipated project income; and
 - Request for presumptive exception.
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2. ANTICIPATED STAFFING OF KEY POSITIONS

As per the Cooperative Agreement Section A.9, point #2, two position, namely (1) Project Manager/ Producer; and (2) Project Coordinator are designated as Key Personnel and are subject to USAID's AOR approval.

SFCG|Nepal hereby requests the approval of the AOR for an amendment in the Key Personnel.

For the effective implementation of the project, we propose a change of staff structuring.

- We propose that the functions of Project Manager/Producer be split between two staff position (i) Producer, and (ii) Project Manager.
- Make the Project Coordinator position redundant, as the Project Manager will cover those functions.

This however, will not have any major cost implications. The changes will be within the allowed budget line flexibility, as per the provision of the Cooperative Agreement.

Key Personnel:

1. **Producer:** The Producer, under the technical guidance and support from the Executive Producer and Assistant Producer, will work closely with the writers, director, production coordinator, casting coordinator, and other key people to ensure the timely and high quality production and broadcast of the TV drama. He will ensure that the storylines, scripts, and messaging are in line with the overall project objectives and results. Also work closely with the Senior Policy Researchers and the Senior Advisor to incorporate the contents from the Think Tank events and consultations in the television drama.

Yubakar Raj Rajkarnikar, SFCG's Director of Programs will cover the role of Producer. His CV has already been submitted along with the proposal.

We would like to request USAID's approval of Yubakar Raj Rajkarnikar as the Producer for Singha Durbar.

2. **Project Manager:** The Project Manager will be responsible for managing overall implementation of project activities and ensuring that the project achieves its set goals and objectives. S/he will work closely with and with guidance from Senior Advisor, Country Director and Producer in managing the project. S/he will coordinate with radio producer, partner/s and senior policy researcher to ensure timely and quality delivery of project activities and deliverables.

The Project Manager will be a full time position. SFCG is currently in the process of recruiting staff for this position.

SFCG will submit the selected candidate for USAID's approval by end of March 2014.

Expatriate Staff:

1. **Serena, Rix Tripathy, Senior Advisor [CV already submitted with proposal]**
The Senior Advisor, based in Kathmandu, will have oversight on content, ensuring that the scripts incorporate best practice in behavior change communication combined with the Common Ground Approach (CGA), and that the different parts of the project are integrated in terms of their messaging and meet the intended behavior change objectives.
 2. **Michael Shipler, Regional Director, Asia**
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The Asia Director, based in Washington D.C., will visit the project at least once to provide on-site technical capacity. He will also ensure that the project yields quality results and meets USAID requirements and compliance on an ongoing basis.

3. Sarah McLaughlin, Regional Manager, Asia

The Regional Manager, based in Washington D.C., will provide support in writing and editing the project reports and help to ensure that the reports meet the USAID requirements and compliance.

4. Deborah Jones, Executive Producer [CV already submitted with proposal]

The Executive Producer, based in Washington D.C., will visit the project twice to lead the scriptwriters through the creative process from outline to final draft of the scripts. In addition, she will oversee the budgeting process with the production company, will supervise and approve the production schedule, and will approve the final edit of the episodes. Deborah Jones works for Common Ground Productions.

National Staff:

5. Rajendra Mulmi, Country Director-Nepal [CV included]

The Country Director will provide overall leadership and guidance to the project team and ensure high quality and timely delivery of the outputs and deliverables. He will assure the overall management and implementation of the project including budgeting, timelines, and relations with partners. He will also provide his technical expertise on program design, capacity building of staff and partners, M&E and designing and facilitating workshops.

6. Niresh Chapagain, Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (DM&E) Coordinator

The DM&E Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring of the project activities, including pre- and post-surveys, FGDs, and audience listenership and viewership surveys; managing data collection and data analysis; and preparing monitoring reports. He will also oversee the final external evaluation.

7. Supriya Sharma, Communications Associate

The Communications Associate will be responsible for ensuring USAID's compliance on branding and marking. She will be responsible to fulfil all of project's communications and publicity needs, including press releases and press relations.

New Recruitment:

SFCG is currently recruiting for the following three positions SFCG|Nepal has also added one additional position of a Radio Drama Producer at 50% level of effort.

8. Radio Drama Coordinator

The Radio Drama Producer will work closely with the Antenna Foundation Nepal (AFN) and co-produce the radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar (SS). S/he will work closely with the producer, director and writers at AFN to ensure that the storylines, scripts and messaging of SS are in line with the project objectives and that the production is of highest quality.

SFCG has already hired Bhabha Sagar Ghimire as the Radio Drama Coordinator.

The following two positions will be added on a needs basis.

9. Policy Researcher

The Policy Researcher will be responsible for the policy stream of the project, including: facilitating collaborative policy dialogue, producing policy papers, research, advising the drama teams on governance content, and building relationships with leaders in government and other sectors. Since the manager who is being recruited has significant experience in policy writing, this position may become redundant. In that case, responsibilities of this role will be assumed by the Manager, utilizing Consultant advisors and researchers.

10. Program Associate

The Program Associate will primarily assist the Project Manager in overall implementation of the project. S/he will be responsible for preparation and implementation of project activities and deliverables. S/he will also work closely with the Senior Program Advisor, Radio Drama Coordinator and the Producer in providing support in implementation of the project activities.

Consultants: SFCG will recruit various consultants including script advisors, researchers, and translators to translate the scripts, throughout the duration of the project, including the Assistant Producer.

- **Stevan Buxt, Assistant Producer [CV already submitted with proposal]**

The Assistant Producer, based temporarily in Kathmandu for the production period, will supervise the production process on a daily basis to ensure that the project is on time and on budget. He will build the capacity of members of the local production team as needed and will trouble shoot problems on the set. Stevan Buxt is an independent highly experienced producer who has prior experience working on serial drama in Nepal, and thus was selected as a sole source expert at the time of proposal writing. His details were included with the original proposal.

3. ACTIVITY AND EVENTS SCHEDULE, INCLUDING PERFORMANCE MILESTONES – JANUARY 2014 – DECEMBER 2015

[illegible]

[illegible]

Activity Stream #4 – Promotional Activities including social media

[illegible]

Monitoring and Evaluation																
Activity/Task	Year 1 - 2014												Year 2 - 2015			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Baseline/Market Survey Researched and Completed				X	X	X										
Monitoring of radio show									X	X	X	X	X	X		
Monitoring of television show														X	X	
Listenership and Viewership Survey												X				X
Monitoring of outreach activities														X	X	X
End-line survey																X
Reporting																
Quarterly Financial Reports submission				X			X			X			X	X	X	X
Quarterly Progress Reports submission				X			X						X	X		
Annual Progress Reports										X					X	
Final Report	Within 60 days after the closure of the project.															

Note: SFCG will provide advance notice about the types and timing of the outreach activities to USAID.
SFCG will share the results from all the surveys with USAID.

4. ACTIVITY DETAILS

Following section provide quarterly activity details for year one of the project.

Quarter 1 – January – March 2014

- **Recruitment, planning, preparations** – In the first quarter of the project SD, SFCG is undertaking the process of recruiting the project staff, planning and preparation for the curriculum processes. These stage involves the following:-
- **Staffing** – In the first quarter of the project, SFCG will hire a Project Manager to manage the project. The Project Manager will be overall responsible for the project deliverables and output. Researchers and consultants will also be selected for various tasks associated with curriculum and policy development. Radio Drama Coordinator is also being recruited to oversee the radio drama.
- **Planning Meeting** – In the first quarter, SFCG will hold a planning meeting with project staff and partner to get aligned on the project timeline, deliverables and other details.
- **Submission of Annual Plan, DM&E Plan and DRR Plan** – SFCG will also prepare the Annual Plan, DM&E Plan and DRR Plan in consultation with USAID and submit in the first quarter of the project.
- **Selection of writers for television and radio dramas** – In the first quarter ending March 2014, SFCG will also select and recruit 3 writers for television drama Singha Durbar. SFCG will also work with partner Antenna Foundation Nepal (AFN) to select 3 writers for radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar. The writers are being selected on the basis of their application, written tests and interviews and prior experience. The selected writers will start writing the dramas in their respective groups from the second quarter of the project. AFN already has writers on its staff so some of the radio writers may be already existing AFN staff.
- **Writers' workshop** – SFCG will also organize a workshop for the writers of both the radio and television dramas, to build their capacity in understanding conflict and writing about it in the radio and television drama in a way that would inspire positive social change.
- **Context Analysis and research** – Context analysis research is being done in the first quarter, including survey and interviews, and desk research, to inform the content of the radio and TV dramas.

Quarter 2 – April – June 2014

- **Activity 1 – Participatory Curriculum Development**
Before writing either the radio or television dramas, SFCG will conduct a multi-step, participatory process in the second quarter of the project to develop the key messages and intended outcomes of the shows. The process would include curriculum workshops and summits described below. These meetings will also be used to develop policy recommendations on each of the key themes addressed.

Curriculum Workshops – SFCG will conduct five, one-day consultation workshops in selected districts across Nepal in which up to 150 relevant stakeholders give input into the

curriculum. Each meeting will bring government officials, politicians, civil society leaders and common citizens together to discuss about their common vision for leadership and key challenges and opportunities of the government. The outcome of these workshops will be used in the Curriculum Summits to be organized in Kathmandu.

- **Curriculum Summit for Radio Drama** – In the second quarter, SFCG will organize a Curriculum Summit for radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar. The purpose of the Summit is to create the curriculum, or message map, for the radio drama. SFCG will convene a group of people including political, government and civil society leaders along with the writers and producers for an in-depth, dialogue summit. Together, they will identify the driving factors of the current political leadership style and carve out core messages which would cause specific changes in a listenership base. This would result in a simple document outlining the key attitudinal changes and core messages that the radio show would aim to achieve.
 - **Curriculum Summit for Television Drama** – A Curriculum Summit will also be organized for television drama Singha Durbar. A simple message map will be developed out of the Summit which would then be dealt with in the television drama, *Singha Durbar*.
 - **Activity 2 – Radio Drama Sthaniya Sarkar**
 - **Story Clinic** – In the second quarter, SFCG will work with partner AFN to conduct a Story Clinic for radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar. The 2-3 days process would involve working with the writers, producer and director to outline the overall story for the radio drama. The clinic will also write the episode outlines for the first 10 episodes of the drama.
 - **Writing** – After the Story Clinic, the writers will take the outlines to start writing the scripts for the drama. The process of writing the drama will continue throughout the first year of the project. SFCG radio drama experts will continuously and closely monitor the drama scripts, and provide feedback for required changes.
 - **Production** – In the second quarter, SFCG will also start the production of the radio drama. Working with partner AFN, SFCG will produce and prepare first 10 episodes of the drama before it goes on air on the third quarter of the project.
 - **Activity 3 – Television Drama Series: Singha Durbar**
 - **Story Clinic** – SFCG will organize a Story Clinic for television drama Singha Durbar in June 2014. In the 10-day Clinic lead by Executive Producer Deborah Jones, (Common Ground Productions). The writers and producers will create the story for the television drama and the outlines for all 13 episodes. Experts in drama writing and governance issues will also be included as resource people in the clinic. The episode plot summaries produced from the Clinic will be provided to USAID to approval. This will be a quick turnaround process and will require approval within 3 days.
 - **Writing** – After the Story Clinic, the writers of SD will start writing the scripts for the episodes of the television drama. SFCG media experts and producers will work closely with the writers in the process for continuous monitoring and feedback. The overall initiative will be overseen by SFCG's Senior Advisor, a technical expert in behavior change communications, to ensure that the messages are presented in the most effective way to ignite shifts in audience attitude and behaviors. The writing
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team will develop the scripts, characters, and storylines to convey the core messages based on the curriculum.

- **Activity 4 – Promotional Campaign - for radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar**

In the second quarter, SFCG will also start the promotional campaign for the radio drama. The campaign will be run by a professional marketing firm and SFCG partners. The marketing will be *mission based*, in that it will not only attract listeners to *Sthaniya Sarkar*, but will also promote the core messages of the shows. The promotional campaign in this quarter will likely include, but not be limited to – radio promos, social media campaign and mobilization of national and local media. The market research started in the first quarter will also help identify the most effective means and mediums for these publicity activities.

- **Activity 5 – Information Policy White Papers**

- **Consultations:** National Level Think Tank Forums – In the second quarter of the project, SFCG will organize Think Tank Events. Eight dialogue events (1/2 - 1 day each) will be held between policy makers, politicians, technical experts, and representatives of organizations working directly on the issues that are identified as key governance challenges that will be covered in the TV drama. Each Think Tank Forum will focus on a different issue that will be addressed in the TV drama, and that has real life policy relevance to Nepal. In addition to providing storyline ideas for the script writers, each session will result in the framing of the issue in a solution oriented way, which informs the key question that will be explored in the policy papers.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation - Baseline**

SFCG will conduct a baseline survey in the second quarter of the project. The baseline addresses the project indicators as presented in the results framework and elaborated in the PMP that has been submitted. It will provide a baseline against which evaluation data can be measured at the end of the project. The baseline will be carried out using questionnaire survey among sample target population in the target districts. The baseline is carried out after the curriculum summit, so it can measure knowledge of the issues that will be covered in the dramas. It will be complete before broadcast begins.

Quarter 3 – July – September 2014

- **Activity 2 – Radio Drama Sthaniya Sarkar**

- **Broadcast** – SFCG will start broadcasting radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar from the third quarter of the project. It will be broadcast across the country on 45 selected FM stations that will be selected based on their popularity among the primary target audience, geographical reach and local credibility. The production cycle of the radio drama – including the writing, recording, production and broadcasting – will continue for 12 months.

- **Activity 3 – Television Drama Series: Singha Durbar**

- **Script Testing** – SFCG will test the storylines and the script with the target audience to ensure that they resonate with the audience. Using SFCG's tried and tested methodologies of script testing, we will test the selected scripts with a sample of the target audience to check for the clarity of the messages, public understanding and appropriateness of the language and characters used. Based on the script testing, we will do necessary changes in the script.
 - **Pre-production** – Pre-production process of the television drama SD will also start in this quarter. Once the script are ready, the production team will conduct a process in
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which every aspect of the show is planned out. This will include casting, rehearsals, location scouting, planning shooting schedules, preparing necessary props for the shoot and many other tasks.

- **Activity 4 – Promotional Campaign**
 - **Promotional Campaign for radio drama** - The publicity for the radio drama that starts in the second quarter of the project will continue in this quarter and throughout the period of broadcast.
- **Activity 5 –Policy White Papers**
 - **Research, writing and review** – After the national level Think Tank Forums in the second quarter, SFCG policy expert in this quarter will utilize the information, the challenges, and the ideas that emerge from the forums, curriculum summit consultations and the baseline study to inform the policy research. S/he will team up with thematic experts to synthesize the information from the consultations and research phase into concise and relevant policy recommendations. Drafted papers will then be provided to experts for peer review and feedback which will then be incorporated into the final writing phase.

Quarter 4 – October – December 2014

- **Activity 2 – Radio Drama Sthaniya Sarkar**
 - **Broadcast** – The broadcast of radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar through 45 local FM stations will continue in the fourth quarter of the project. The production cycle of the radio drama – including the writing, recording, production and broadcasting – will continue.
 - **Activity 3 – Television Drama Series: Singha Durbar**
 - **Pre-production** – The pre-production for television drama SD that starts in the third quarter of the project will continue in this quarter. By the end of the process, all the preparation will be completed for the shooting of the TV series to start.
 - **Production** – The shooting for the TV series will also be conducted in this period of the project. A local production house – selected as part of the production assessment - will be responsible for the making of the series. The shooting will mostly be in Kathmandu.
 - **Activity 4 – Promotional Campaign**
 - **For Radio and Television Drama** - The publicity for the radio drama that starts in the second quarter of the **project** will continue in this quarter and throughout the period of broadcast. In addition, the promotional campaign for television drama Singha Durbar will start in this quarter of the project. The initial promotional activities for SD will include but not limited to social media and media coverage. Other avenues like television promotions and other publicity materials will be used in the later phase of the project when the drama will be broadcast.
 - **Activity 5 – Information Policy White Papers**
 - **Research, writing and review** – The research, writing and review process of the policy white papers that starts in the third quarter will continue in the last quarter of year one of the project. The publication and dissemination of the white papers will be done in year two of the project.
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5. TRAVEL PLANS

Following are the international travel plans for the project in the year 2014. The dates are tentative and SFCG will inform USAID of the exact dates of travel at least 3 weeks prior to actual travel.

SFCG will provide separate cover letter for AO with budget details for her approval in advance of their travel.

S.N	Name	Destination	Dates of travel	Purpose	Project Result:
1	Deborah Jones, Executive Producer (SFCG)	Nepal (Washington- Nepal return)	Arrival - June 7 th – June 21 st .	Conduct Story Clinic with Singha Durbar TV drama writers to develop storylines	Well-crafted storylines for Singha Durbar TV show.
2	Stevan Buxt, Assistant Producer	Nepal (South Africa- Nepal return)	Arrival - August 2014 Departure - December 2014	Work with Producer on all aspects of pre-production, and managing the shooting	Well managed preproduction and production on time and on budget of Singha Durbar TV show.
3	Deborah Jones, Executive Producer (SFCG)	Nepal (Washington- Nepal return)	Arrival – November 15, 2014 Departure – November 30, 2014	Oversee the post production of Singha Durbar	High quality post-production of Singha Durbar television series
4	Rajendra Mulmi, Country Director (SFCG Nepal)	Nepal to Washington DC return	Departure - November 11, 2014 Arrival - November 18, 2014	Strategy meetings with Common Ground Productions, regional director, and other HQ technical support to prepare for launch of TV and policy dialogues. USAID meetings	Clear strategy for effective launch and follow up of Singha Durbar TV show. Capacity building for CD and SA on project leadership and management, and managing TV production.
5	Serena Rix Tripathee, Senior Advisor (SFCG Nepal)	Nepal to Washington DC Return	Departure - November 11, 2014 Arrival - November 18	Strategy meeting with Common Ground productions regional director, and other HQ technical support to prepare for launch of TV and policy dialogues. USAID meetings	Clear strategy for effective launch and follow up of Singha Durbar TV show. Capacity building for CD and SA on project leadership and management and managing TV production.
6	Michael Shieler Regional Director Asia (SFCG)	Washington Dc- Nepal	Dates TBD	Project management and compliance oversight, technical input for design of outreach and policy streams.	Hold CD and SA accountable to high standards of program quality and program and financial management. Well-designed outreach strategy.

6. EXPENSES (ANNUAL BUDGET)

1. Year 1 Budget: The annual budget for 2014 is attached as a separate spread sheet.
2. **Anticipated Project Income**: SFCG will seek to work with private marketing companies in this project. Section A.10, point #4 of the Cooperative Agreement encourages SFCG to collaborate with the private sector. SFCG will work with the marketing companies and seek to do some or all of these – sell the advertisement spaces within Singha Durbar broadcast time on television, sell the DVDs of the television series, work with a private company to produce and distribute a full length feature film version of the television series. All of the proposed activities will ensure the participation and hence the increased ownership of private sector in the project goals and objectives. Selling the advertisement air-time could provide additional funds for the promotion and outreach of SD. Marketing DVDs will not only provide additional budget which can be used for promotion and outreach, it will also ensure that larger population will have easy access to the television series.

SFCG requests for including the provision for anticipated project income in the agreement.

As per the provision set forth in 22 CFR 226.24 (b)1, the project income will be added to funds committed by USAID and will be used to further eligible project objectives.

In particular, if there is sufficient funds raised from the private sector, SFCG aims to use the anticipated additional income to produce a movie version of SD. The movie will ensure larger viewership and popularity of the show. SFCG will pre-inform and seek approval from USAID of any of such collaboration with private companies, and all income generated thus will be used for the benefit of the project.

3. **Payments**: SFCG has a Letter of Credit (LOC) account with USAID. Our LOC number is 61A1P.

Based on this, SFCG hereby requests USAID for a modification of the agreement to include this grant on the drawdown mechanism through PMS.

7. PURCHASES INCLUDING THOSE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

SFCG does not anticipate any purchases that are subject to USAID's approval.

8. EVENT CALENDAR OF THE RADIO AND TV EPISODES TO BE BROADCAST

Note: The topics to be covered in each episode will be finalized during the script writing process, when the story outlines are completed and presented to USAID for approval.

July 2014	August 2014	September 2014	October 2014
On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama (Weekly)	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama (weekly)	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama
November 2014	December 2014	January 2015	February 2015
On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama
March 2015	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015
On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama	On Air Sthaniya Sarkar radio serial drama
	Singha Durbar television serial drama (weekly)	Singha Durbar television serial drama	Singha Durbar television serial drama

9. ANTICIPATED SUB-AWARDS

SFCG|Nepal will work with a number of sub-grantees including production partners, organizations and individuals:

1. **Production and Broadcast of Radio Drama Sthaniya Sarkar:**

SFCG will provide sub-award to Antenna Foundation Nepal (AFN) to produce and broadcast radio drama Sthaniya Sarkar.

AFN has already been proposed as a partner for radio drama production and broadcast in the project proposal.

SFCG has submitted a "Request for Sub-award Approval" and have already obtained USAID's approval of the sub-awardee.

2. **Production and Broadcast of Television Drama Singha Durbar:**

SFCG will provide a number of sub-awards to both organizations and individuals for the production and broadcast of television drama Singha Durbar.

SFCG anticipates agreements with the following:

- **Director, SD** – The director of SD will be overall responsible for the production of SD. S/he will work closely with script writers, AD, DOP and other production staff in the pre, during and post production of the series. S/he will also be engaged in the promotional and outreach activities of the series. The Director will be recruited through a combination of advertising and targeted recruitment to find the most suitable and qualified personnel.

Assistant Director (AD) – SFCG will also appoint an AD to assist the director in the production of SD. SD will work with script writers, DOP and other production staff under guidance from the director.

- **Director of Photography** – The Director of Photography will be a key member of the production team, responsible for cinematography of SD under the guidance of the director.

Writers - SFCG will hire 3 writers to write the story lines and scripts of the television series SD. The writers will work closely with the producers and director to create the scripts for the 13 episodes. Of the three writers, SFCG has already selected Abinash Bikram Shah. Abinash was a key writer in Hamro Team, a 13 part television series that SFCG produced in 2010, and proved to be a very good writer.

- SFCG will also identify and appoint other talents for the production of SD as and when required.

SFCG anticipates giving out sub-award to the following organizations/ companies:

- **Television Production Company**

SFCG will appoint one production company to produce the television series SD. The company will work with the director and AD in the pre-production and production phase of the series.

- **Outreach partner organizations**

At the time of conducting outreach (final quarter of Year 1, and in Year 2) local organizations will be selected to conduct outreach in the districts.

As per the requirements of the Cooperative Agreement, SFCG will request a prior written concurrence from USAID's AOR and final written consent from the AO for the budgeted sub awards.

10. REQUEST FOR PRESUMPTIVE EXCEPTION

SFCG|Nepal has already submitted a Branding and Marking Plan, which is already part of the Cooperative Agreement.

SFCG would brand all the project activities and deliverables according to the Branding and Marking Plan, in line with USAID guidelines and compliance requirements.

However, SFCG would request for presumptive exemption for one of the project activities – under Activity 5: Informing Policy: White paper, (a) Consultations: National Level Think Tank Event.

The think tank events will bring together a group of participants who have a stake in the issue being discussed – policy makers, politicians, technical experts, and other stakeholders working directly on the issues that are identified in the Curriculum Summit as key governance challenges. These Forums are designed to bring together key stakeholders in an environment of open dialogue and exploration to come up with ideas as to how a functioning effective government would tackle specific governance challenges. Each Think Tank Forum will focus on a different issue that will be addressed in Singha Durbar, and that has real life policy relevance to Nepal. The Think Tank Forums will enable the participants to engage creatively and imaginatively with these challenging topics in a collaborative space. In addition to providing storyline ideas for the script writers, each session will result in the framing of the issue in a solution oriented way, which informs the key question that will be explored in the policy papers.

We suspect that branding and marking these events might "compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of the program". It would be crucial to not brand these events to help create a neutral and comfortable atmosphere for the high level participants, so that they feel comfortable sharing their honest thoughts and ideas.

Therefore, we would like to request for presumptive exemption, as provisioned by 22CFR 226.91(h)(1)(i).
